

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
GREENVILLE DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Criminal No: 8:22-cr-151

v.

**M&L EXECUTIVE ENTERPRISES, LLC**

PLEA AGREEMENT

General Provisions

This PLEA AGREEMENT is made this 16<sup>th</sup> day of Feb,  
2022, between the United States of America, as represented by  
United States Attorney COREY F. ELLIS, Assistant United States  
Attorney William J. Watkins, Jr.; the Defendant, **M&L Executive  
Enterprises, LLC**, and Defendant's attorney, J. Bradley Bennett.

IN CONSIDERATION of the mutual promises made herein, the  
parties agree as follows:

1. The Defendant agrees to waive Indictment and arraignment, and  
to plead guilty to an Information charging a violation of 18  
U.S.C. § 2320, which prohibits trafficking in counterfeit  
goods.

In order to sustain its burden of proof, the Government is  
required to prove the following:

- A. the defendant trafficked in goods and services,
- B. did so intentionally
- C. used a "counterfeit mark on or in connection with such  
goods or services," and

D. knew that the mark was counterfeit.

The maximum penalty for this offense is:

A fine of not more than \$5,000,000;

A plus a special assessment of \$400.

2. The Defendant agrees to provide detailed financial information to the United States Probation Office prior to sentencing. The Defendant further understands and agrees that any monetary penalty imposed is not dischargeable in bankruptcy.

A. Fines: The parties agree that in light of the forfeiture in this case of \$107,344, the Defendant is not subject to a fine.

B. Special Assessment: Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3013, the Defendant must pay a special assessment of \$400.00 for each felony count for which it is convicted.

3. The Defendant understands that the obligations of the Government within the Plea Agreement are expressly contingent upon the Defendant's abiding by federal and state laws. In the event that the Defendant fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Agreement, either express or implied, the Government will have the right, at its sole election, to void all of its obligations under this Agreement and the Defendant

will not have any right to withdraw the plea of guilty to the offense(s) enumerated herein.

**Forfeiture**

4. The Defendant agrees to voluntarily surrender to, abandon, and not to contest the forfeiture of any and all assets and property, or portions thereof, which are subject to forfeiture pursuant to any provision of law, including but not limited to, property in the possession or control of the Defendant or Defendant's nominees. Specifically, the Defendant agrees to voluntarily surrender, and not contest the forfeiture of property identified in the Information, and any forfeiture Bill of Particulars, Specifically:

(a) **Proceeds/Forfeiture Judgment:**

A sum of money equal to all proceeds the Defendant obtained, directly or indirectly, from the offense charged in this Information, and all interest and proceeds traceable thereto, and/or such sum that equals all property derived from or traceable to Defendant's violation of Title 18.

(b) **Counterfeit Goods:**

Miscellaneous counterfeit marks and goods, including belts, clothing, wallets, footwear, purses, hats, and shoes in connection with which counterfeit marks were knowingly used.

(c) **Cash/United States Currency:**

\$107,344.00 in United States Currency  
Seized from: Missy Thomas

5. With regard to each and every asset listed in the Information or seized in a related investigation or administrative, state, or local action, the Defendant stipulates and agrees:

The Defendant agrees and consents to the forfeiture of these assets pursuant to any federal criminal, civil judicial or administrative forfeiture action. The Defendant also hereby agrees to waive all constitutional, statutory and procedural challenges in any manner (including direct appeal, habeas corpus, or any other means) to any forfeiture carried out in accordance with this Plea Agreement on any grounds, including that the forfeiture described herein constitutes an excessive fine, was not properly noticed in the charging instrument, addressed by the Court at the time of the guilty plea, announced at sentencing, or incorporated into the judgment.

To its forfeiture herein, if necessary as substitute property under 21 U.S.C. § 853(p), as made applicable by 18 U.S.C. § 982(b)(1) or any other statute, or in a separate administrative or civil judicial proceeding.

That the Defendant has or had a possessory interest or other legal interest in each item or property.

To assist the United States in the recovery of all assets by (i) taking whatever steps are necessary or requested by the United States to pass clear title to the United States; (ii) preventing the disbursement of any moneys and sale of any property or assets; (iii) not encumbering or transferring any real estate after the Defendant's signing of this Plea Agreement; and (iv) directing all financial institutions to turn over and surrender to the United States all funds and records regarding accounts listed in any document signed by the Defendant pursuant to this plea agreement, as criminal proceeds or substitute property.

The Defendant waives all rights to notice of forfeiture under Rule 32.2 and of any other action or proceeding regarding such assets. The Defendant consents and waives all rights to compliance by the United States with any applicable deadlines under 18 U.S.C. § 983(a). Any related administrative claim filed by the Defendant is hereby withdrawn.

Pursuant to Rule 32.2(b)(4), the Defendant agrees that the preliminary order of forfeiture will satisfy the notice requirement and will be final as to the Defendant at the time it is entered. In the event the forfeiture is omitted from the judgment, the Defendant agrees that the forfeiture order may be incorporated into the written judgment at any time pursuant to Rule 36.

If the United States discovers that the Defendant has not fully disclosed all assets, the United States may seek forfeiture of any subsequently-discovered assets, and the Defendant agrees to the immediate forfeiture of any such assets.

The Defendant further agrees to make a full and complete disclosure of all assets over which Defendant exercises control and those which are held or controlled by nominees. The Defendant agrees that Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11 and § 1B1.8 of the United States Sentencing Commission Guidelines will not protect from forfeiture, assets disclosed by the Defendant as part of his/her cooperation. The Defendant further agrees to submit to a polygraph examination on the issue of assets if it is deemed necessary by the United States.

The Defendant agrees to waive any double jeopardy claims the Defendant may have as a result of a forfeiture proceeding against any of these properties as provided for by this Plea Agreement and agrees to waive any claims that the forfeiture described herein constitutes an excessive fine.

Forfeiture of the Defendant's assets shall not be treated as satisfaction of restitution, cost of imprisonment, or any other penalty the Court may impose upon the Defendant in addition to forfeiture. The United States may use the value of forfeited property for restitution, but is not required to do so.

6. The Defendant also agrees to voluntarily transfer all right, title, interest and claim in the above-described property and/or assets to the United States of America. Furthermore, the Defendant attests, under penalty of perjury, that the

Defendant owns the above-described property and/or assets free of any liens and encumbrances, and that no other person or entity has a claim to the above-described property and/or assets.

7. The Defendant represents to the court that it has met with its attorney on a sufficient number of occasions and for a sufficient period of time to discuss the Defendant's case and receive advice; that the Defendant has been truthful with its attorney and related all information of which the Defendant is aware pertaining to the case; that the Defendant and its attorney have discussed possible defenses, if any, to the charges in the Information including the existence of any exculpatory or favorable evidence or witnesses, discussed the Defendant's right to a public trial by jury or by the Court, the right to the assistance of counsel throughout the proceedings, the right to call witnesses in the Defendant's behalf and compel their attendance at trial by subpoena, the right to confront and cross-examine the government's witnesses, the Defendant's right to testify in his own behalf, or to remain silent and have no adverse inferences drawn from his silence; and that the Defendant, with the advice of counsel, has weighed the relative benefits of a trial by jury or by the Court versus a plea of guilty pursuant to this Agreement, and has entered this Agreement as a matter of the

Defendant's free and voluntary choice, and not as a result of pressure or intimidation by any person.

8. The Defendant is aware that 18 U.S.C. § 3742 and 28 U.S.C. § 2255 afford every defendant certain rights to contest a conviction and/or sentence. Acknowledging those rights, the Defendant, in exchange for the concessions made by the Government in this Plea Agreement, waives the right to contest either the conviction or the sentence in any direct appeal or other post-conviction action, including any proceedings under 28 U.S.C. § 2255. This waiver does not apply to claims of ineffective assistance of counsel, prosecutorial misconduct, or future changes in the law that affect the defendant's sentence. This agreement does not affect the rights or obligations of the Government as set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3742(b). Nor does it limit the Government in its comments in or responses to any post-sentencing matters.

9. The Defendant waives all rights, whether asserted directly or by a representative, to request or receive from any department or agency of the United States any records pertaining to the investigation or prosecution of this case, including without limitation any records that may be sought under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, or the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a.

10. The parties hereby agree that this Plea Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties; that this Agreement supersedes all prior promises, representations and statements of the parties; that this Agreement shall not be binding on any party until the Defendant tenders a plea of guilty to the court having jurisdiction over this matter; that this Agreement may be modified only in writing signed by all parties; and that any and all other promises, representations and statements, whether made prior to, contemporaneous with or after this Agreement, are null and void.

2/16/22  
Date

John F. F.  
DATE

Attorney for M&L Executive Enterprises, LLC  
Duly authorized representative of ~~Attorney for the Defendant~~  
M&L Executive Enterprises, LLC

J. Bradley Bennett  
J. Bradley Bennett  
ATTORNEY FOR THE DEFENDANT

2/19/22  
Date

COERY F. ELLIS  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

William J. Watkins, Jr.  
William J. Watkins, Jr.  
ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEY